



Ask Mamma or the Richest Commoner in England

Considering that Billy Pringle, or Fine Billy, as his good-natured friends called him, was only an underbred chap, he was as good an imitation of a Swell as ever we saw. He had all the airy dreaminess of a hereditary high flyer, while his big talk and off-hand manner strengthened the delusion.

It was only when you came to close quarters with him and found that though he talked in pounds he acted in pence, and marked his fine dictionary words and laboured expletives, that you came to the conclusion that he was "painfully gentlemanly." So few people, however, agree upon what a gentleman is, that Billy was well calculated to pass muster with the million. Fine shirts, fine ties, fine talk, fine trinkets, go a long way towards furnishing the character with many. Billy was liberal, not to say prodigal, in all these. The only infallible rule we know is, that the man who is always talking about being a gentleman never is one. Just as the man who is always talking about honour, morality, fine feeling, and so on never knows anything of these qualities but the name. - Summary From The Book

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